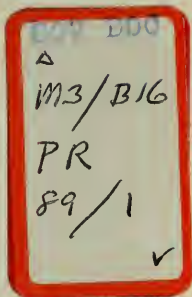


*The Urban Plantings Series*

Gov 92-689

# Floral Plantings in Urban Landscapes



*Published by*  
The Massachusetts Horticultural Society  
*with the City of Boston, Parks and Recreation Department*





# A Timely Issue

Over the past decade the character of our urban environments has undergone a renaissance. Once grey and decaying jungles of steel, brick, and concrete, they have come alive through the interest and care of progressive civic leaders, architects and a new generation of citizens concerned with the quality of urban life.

While most attention has been focused on the built environment, the landscapes and plantings in cities have finally begun to draw attention. Unfortunately, surprisingly little has been written about effective designs for urban plantings in medians, containers, rotaries, and gateways, which is what has brought us to this publication.

Our goal is twofold: to provide decision makers with an overview of the process of creating *effective* urban plantings and to provide some additional technical information for our land managers and those assisting them.

Improvements of urban green space can occur at all levels, from brick planters on neighborhood corners to major city avenues or parksides full of beautiful plants. The reward for citizens and visitors alike is far in excess of the small investment in time and money required for these plantings. A well-chosen design with appropriate plantings can be the catalyst for truly successful urban public places. And, unlike the built environment where structures are permanent, plantings can be periodically changed to provide diversity, vibrancy, and renewed interest.

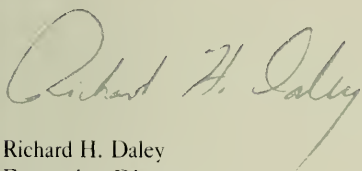
The author, Geraldine Weinstein, is the immediate past director of horticulture for the City of New York and has recently completed a Loeb Fellowship at Harvard University. She currently is working on a variety of projects in Boston and New York. We are delighted to publish this important contribution to urban horticulture and design.

Editorial assistance was provided by Bruce Rutter, Vice President and Director of Planning at Hill, Holliday, Connors and Cosmopolos. The graphic design was created by Robin Jareaux of No Dogs Design. Both Mr. Rutter and Ms. Jareaux are Boston area residents with active interests in gardening. Paul Evans, Community Services Department Horticulturist at the Massachusetts Hor-

ticultural Society, provided many suggestions on the text as well as coordination of the printing

Richard Colbert, Horticulturist, Newark, Delaware Department of Parks, Gary Koller, Managing Horticulturist, Arnold Arboretum, Lynden Miller, Director of the Conservatory Garden in Central Park, and James A. van Sweden, Oehme, van Sweden and Associates, Landscape Architects, all provided valuable suggestions regarding plant materials and design for which we are indebted.

We especially want to acknowledge gratefully the initiative, encouragement, and financial support of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department in producing this publication.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Richard H. Daley". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Richard H. Daley  
Executive Director  
Massachusetts Horticultural Society



# Floral Plantings in Urban Landscapes

*by*  
*Geraldine*  
*Weinstein*



*Cover photo:  
The Boston Public  
Garden's formal,  
geometric beds create  
a clear landscape  
message and are  
appropriate to its  
overall design.*

# Plants in Context

For floral plantings in the urban environment to work best, they must complement, accent, and enhance their immediate surroundings, rather than stand alone. The palette of plants can include small trees, shrubs, herbaceous perennials, ornamental grasses and annuals. Well-designed plantings recognize the visual and environmental character of existing landscape functions — buildings, streets, existing trees, rock outcrops, and vistas. By first relating the plantings to these features, the entire landscape is strengthened, and visual clutter is avoided.

The plantings must be in scale with their surroundings. Too often our choice of plantings is made as if all viewers were standing over plants in a home garden rather than in the midst of speeding cars and tall buildings. For colors to work in this environment, they must harmonize with adjacent structures. At the same time, the plantings should create strong visual impressions. Height, strong foliage effects, or a contrast in color, used alone or in combination, stimulate interest in the midst of activity. Simple design elements such as color, texture, or size can be manipulated to create the effect desired in the landscape; for example, a single but bold contrast in color can be used to capture attention in the intense activity of a traffic rotary or pedestrian island.

Professional horticulturists, landscape architects, and landscape designers should be called upon whenever possible to assure the successful integration of plantings into the landscape. Each site should be treated

differently for planting, just as each building should have its own character.

Decision makers need not be overwhelmed with the large selection of plants available. They should, however, understand the principles of good urban planting so they may see that planning and maintenance are being done well, whether by staff or by their consultants.

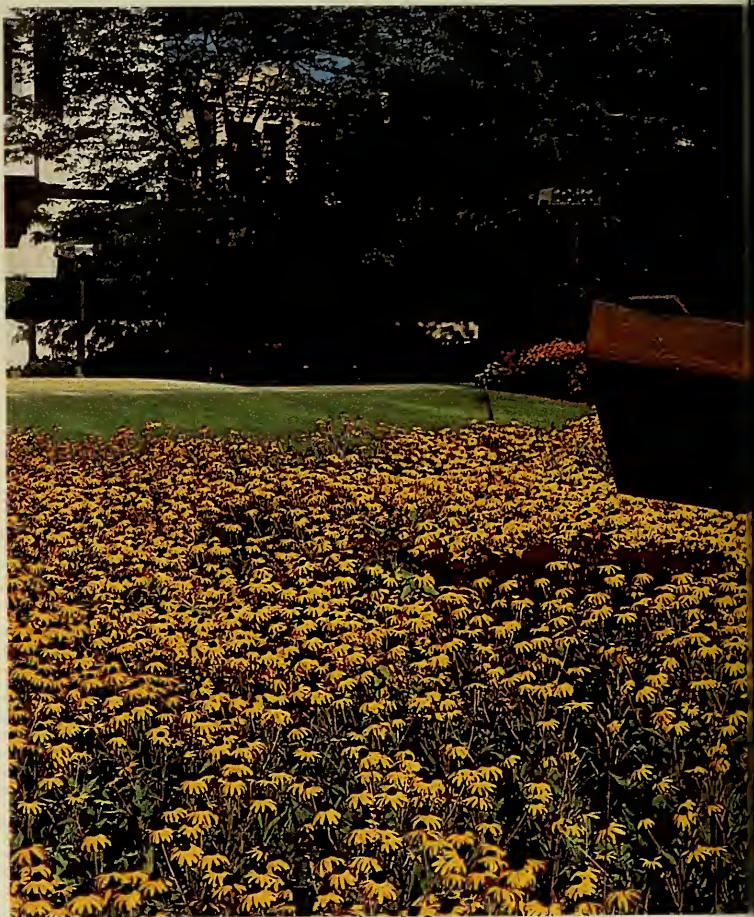
Settings for urban plantings range from parks of hundreds of acres with thousands of plants to small containers capable of supporting only a few dozen plants. Clearly, the design of plantings, their impact, their selection and their maintenance requirements vary dramatically according to each site and its environment.

Most urban and public planting sites will fall into one of three broad categories, in a gradient from the largest to the smallest:

- Roadsides and larger parks, which are naturalistic settings;
- Medians, rotaries, squares, and gateways, which have somewhat restricted rooting spaces;
- Streetscape containers with very limited rooting spaces.

Determination of the category of your site should be based on its characteristics.

*"Too often our choice of plantings is made as if all viewers were standing over them in a home garden, rather than in the midst of speeding cars and tall buildings."*



*In roadsides and parks, masses of one species in a single color result in large-scale impact.*

## Roadsides and Larger Parks



**R**oadsides and Larger Parks are landscapes which can include existing trees, turf, and other natural features such as rock outcroppings and water. These are the largest spaces for plantings in the urban environment. Users may pass frequently, perhaps as often as weekly or daily on foot, on bicycle or in automobiles, and may linger for an afternoon or pass by in a few moments.

**T**o be read by passing motorists, the roadside plantings must be elongated to match the viewers' speed. Except in very large open areas, height should be varied within a mid-range, to be viewed peripher-

*Settings  
and Users*

*Dimensions*

## *Colors and Textures*

ally from a car window (perhaps 2-20 feet.)

In larger parks a variety of heights may be included within broad massings to provide interest for the pedestrian who has more time to identify small changes in scale.

Quickly glimpsed floral plantings along roadsides must be like bold brush strokes of color repeated at intervals, since rapid color changes in the landscape will blur into a muddle. When possible, colors should be reduced to one or two per planting area or "brush stroke." This is because a rainbow effect is not easily read at motoring speeds. The choice of colors may be determined by the degree of attention desired, the amount of light, and the proximity of other permanent colors on bridges, buildings, and signs.

In general, hot colors (yellow, orange, red) will attract the eye more readily than cool colors (blue, violet, green). In bright, sunny areas almost all colors will be noticeable, while in shady areas whites, bright pastels, and yellows attract attention.

While bright colors might initially seem desirable for all settings, the naturalistic quality of roadsides and larger parks suggest a color scheme closely associated with changing seasons. We have come to expect bright colors in early spring with tulips, narcissi, scilla, and snowdrops as a welcome change from the starkness of winter. As the spring evolves, the "palette" turns more to the whites, blues, and soft pastels found in dogwood, cherries, lilacs, irises, and early summer perennials. Mid-summer is a time of hot colors, often in bold contrast with natural opposites or complementaries (e.g., orange/blue, yellow/violet, red/green). Fall is a time for simple color schemes based around the golds, reds, browns of leaves, or the remaining blues and violets of asters. Winter need not be all grey and white; dark



*Textural variety can be achieved by different flower forms, while a single color creates strong contrast.*

green evergreens may be contrasted with white birch, snow with the red branches of siberian dogwood or the golds of dried grasses.

While most structures in larger parks and along roadsides are neutral in color, occasionally they may stand out as beacons in the landscape. Color choice of plantings near these structures should be chosen to harmonize clearly or contrast but not clash.

While the overall color scheme may be chosen to provide a simple, bold landscape for motorists, subtle variations may be

8

*Flower spikes (foreground) provide a contrast of form when seen with the mounds of linear foliage of ornamental grasses.*



imposed on the design to provide interest for pedestrians in parks. In this way a bank of rhododendrons seen as “pink” to motorists may actually include 3-5 different pink-to-lavendar pastels.

Textures not apparent at motoring speeds may be used to increase visual interest within a monochromatic planting for pedestrians. Foliage texture adds interest by combining broad-leafed plants with ornamental grasses or needle-leaf conifers. Variations in flower type, such as round-shaped daisies contrasted with the spikes of lupines, are additional ways to add texture during the period of bloom.

### *Appropriate Plants*

Naturalistic planting may be most effective along roadsides as it relates to a larger landscape context. When seen, all plants chosen must be viewed in their relationship to other elements in the landscape — rock outcrops, large trees — making



*“Plants must be viewed in their relationship to other elements in the landscape, making them appear natural rather than engineered.”*

them appear a natural rather than an engineered part of the roadside landscape. A large planting of roadside perennials — black-eyed susans, daylilies, coreopsis, butterfly weed, clovers, chicory, etc. — while providing continuous color, conveys an image of fields and meadows. Masses of low-growing perennial ground covers, wide-spreading clumps of ornamental grasses with multitudes of naturalized spring-flowering bulbs in the foreground become possibilities for additional color and further heighten the image of nature.

Combinations of two or three species of shrubs that are naturalistic in form, flowering, and growth habit, woven into an existing landscape, and displaying color through flowers, foliage, fruit, and bark, convey seasonal awareness on an appropriately large scale. Using two different sizes of the same shrub species mirrors more effectively nature's scheme.



*Massing plants of a single color provides a greater and more sustained impact in medians and rotaries.*

# Medians, Rotaries, Squares and Gateways



**M**edians, rotaries, squares, and gateways into towns and cities are smaller than roadsides and larger parks. These settings have a greater proportion of hard to soft surface and impose greater restriction on root expansion and, therefore, on plant selection. These settings are usually geometrically shaped spaces: rotaries are large circles, medians are elongated rectangles, and gateways are paired triangles or squares. As such they relate more to the forms of the built environment than to the natural landscape. Planting should be more architectural, more structured, formal, and dense.

**T**he height range suggested for roadsides and larger parks is appropriate for most medians, rotaries, squares, and gateways. Generally, median plantings should be

*Settings  
and Users*

*Dimensions*

somewhat lower, in proportion to the width of the median. Rotary and square plantings may vary in height, but significant portions of the planting mass should be kept low to allow motorists to see over the rotary. Gateways can be created by plantings alone or in combination with permanent structures. In gateways the plantings may rise to greater heights to suggest an important entryway. Alternatively, multi-tiered plantings can provide a strong focal point in a space lacking in landscape character.

### *Colors and Textures*

**R**epetition of the same color or colors over many blocks in a median will add a sense of grandeur to a city avenue. Most colors will be appropriate for a median, as the viewer will have sufficient time to read the plantings. In rotaries, colors either alone or in simple combinations will work better than multicolor plantings since time spent in the rotary by the viewer is usually brief.

Bold contrast through texture is a way of capturing attention in these busy environments. Changes of texture should occur over large masses of plants to be noticed by motorists.

### *Appropriate Plants*

**O**rnamental grasses, tolerant of heat and periods of drought, prized for their architecturally linear foliage, unusual flowers and seed pods, and for the landscape characteristics they convey can play an important role in areas surrounded by asphalt and concrete. They provide a sense of scale by their mass and attract attention by their movement. Autumn foliage and the seed heads nodding through winter bring seasonal awareness to sites devoid of movement and color.

Shrub roses are also appropriate; the dense growth habit of "Seafoam," "Care-free," "Bonica," and "Fairy," among others, minimize weedy intrusions and weed removal. Once well-established, shrub roses

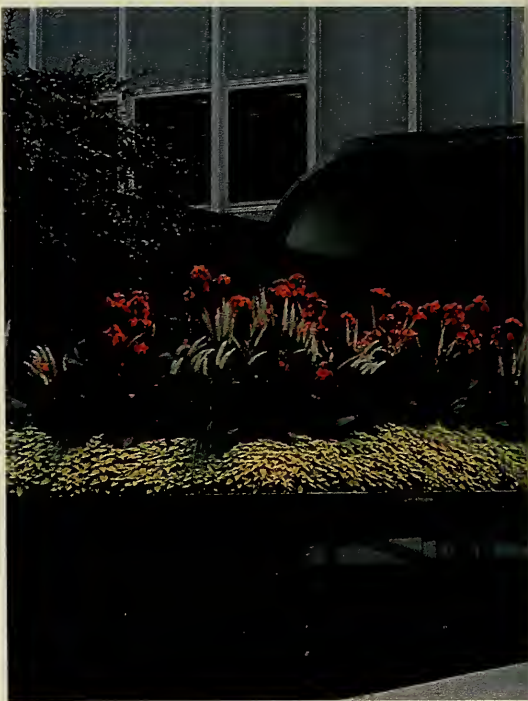
repel rather than trap litter. Their long season of bloom — June until Thanksgiving — is one of many reasons for their use. When planted as a mass rather than as visually distinct plants, deterioration of a few plants is not noticeable to the passing motorist. In an environment where the drying effects of reradiated heat and wind tunnelling are serious problems, the wide-spreading habit of the shrub, shading the soil surface, minimizes evaporation and water loss, thus reducing the need for irrigation.

Masses of evergreen shrubs, combined with large perennials, annuals or displays of spring flowering bulbs, provide another way of linking color with impact. The evergreens provide the structure and foil for these brightly colored plants. Again, simple but strong color combinations are best and make most advantage of the evergreen backdrop.

Multiple groves of flowering ornamental trees provide still another alternative. Crabapples with their flower, fruit, and form provide strong seasonal interest throughout the year and are a visual favorite of the public. But other, less frequently used species deserve attention, too. Small ornamental trees which should be more frequently used include *Styrax japonica* (Japanese Snowbell), *Halesia carolina* (Carolina Silverbell), *Cornus mas* (Cornelian Cherry) and *Cercis canadensis* (Redbud), among others.

*"In an environment where the drying effects of wind tunnelling and reradiated heat are serious problems, the wide-spreading habit of the shrub minimizes evaporation and water loss."*

*Variety in texture and height, as well as a bold color contrast, draws attention in an area of intense activity.*



## Containers

*The strong contrast of red and white in this container planting creates interest for pedestrians.*





Containers are the smallest of urban planting spaces and, for plants, the most restrictive. They relate more closely to pedestrians although they may be visible to passing motorists. These plantings are used to humanize the hard edges of the city's sidewalks, streets, and buildings. If they are to succeed, they must immediately seize interest and become a focal point or they will be overwhelmed by the surrounding hard environment where buildings, signs and traffic compete for the attention of the pedestrian. Even more than other urban plantings, container plantings are defeated by the accumulation of litter and weeds. Bear in mind that the containers themselves must be attractive; otherwise plantings will not evoke the admiration they deserve.

Containers should be as large as possible because their use automatically limits the dimensions of plantings in terms of

### *Settings and Users*

### *Dimensions*

## *Colors and Textures*

## *Appropriate Plants*

depth and expanse. They should be as wide as possible to develop some sense of scale and allow space for root growth. Height should be manipulated in relation to the volume of activity flowing by. When crowds are frequently present, the height of plantings should be increased to capture attention. If the site is quiet and uncrowded allowing closer inspection, the plantings can be shorter. There must be some tall or distinctive plants within the container to attract initial attention.

Remember that the container itself is part of the aesthetic impact. A well-designed container allows the planting, instead of the built structure, to be the focal point.

**I**n container plantings, foliage can have as powerful an effect as color. Broad-leaved plants, in contrast with the linear foliage of ornamental grasses, can provide structure for the planting while providing the framework within which a single color or color combination can catch the eye.

**P**lants used in containers *must* be tolerant of an environment which can either quickly dry out during heat and drought or become flooded after heavy rains.

To assure plant vitality over a number of years, there must be ample room for annual root growth. The plant species must be able to tolerate seasonal variations in temperature. This root hardiness is especially important since, within the confined rooting space, the insulating and buffering effect of an extensive soil environment is absent. Some plant species that are hardy at ground level may be susceptible to winter injury in containers. Ornamental grasses in particular can tolerate heat and drought and can serve as the backbone of the planting. Even in the restricted space, they will provide the mass needed for impact.

# Technical Notes

# Site Preparation

Site preparation is absolutely essential for success! Preparation determines whether subsequent maintenance is minimal and achievable or whether maintenance, having the burden of covering up the mistakes made during site preparation, becomes unworkable and economically impossible. Maintenance cannot turn a poorly drained site into one that is well-drained. It does not make a site affected by re-radiated heat from pavement cooler. Nor does it make wind tunnelling from urban canyons less severe.

Specific site preparation can buffer the landscape planting from rapid dessication and other types of stress. An in-depth look during several site visits prior to design can identify the key environmental impacts most harmful to plant growth. These can include, thermal radiation from surrounding back surfaces, wind tunnelling, salt run-off, and root competition from adjacent and established plants.

Key considerations for preparation are:

- Make sure the soil is porous and well-drained, prepared throughout the planting area to a depth of at least 2½';
- Prepare the whole planting area, not just the planting holes;
- Avoid depressed areas where water collects or very steep areas where water runs off rapidly;
- Site new plantings as far as possible from the root system of existing trees and shrubs;
- Aerate the surrounding ground to maintain optimal infiltration of oxygen and moisture.

The most important issue is to promote quick plant establishment and rapid growth, minimizing the ongoing weed removal. Rapid growth and a profusion of foliage and flowers reflect an equally vigorous and expanding root system. Whether a one-foot-high annual or a towering major canopy tree, plant roots need moisture and, above all, oxygen. A plentiful supply of oxygen is found in soils that are porous and well-drained. Roots then easily penetrate and expand through the growing environment, creating a root mass able to sustain plant growth during periods of environmental stress. A sandy loam having 70% sand by volume promotes good drainage and provides available mois-

ture. In addition, one third of the sand component should be coarse .05 millimeter to .1 millimeter builder's sand (rather than a finer grain.)

The soil is still able to retain moisture because of the 20-25% clay component and 5-10% organic matter content. Composted leaf mold with a pH not exceeding 6.5 is an excellent source of organic matter. Be sure to incorporate it thoroughly, since clumps of unincorporated organic matter retain excessive moisture, depriving plant roots of oxygen. Organic matter, in some cases, may need to be added annually.

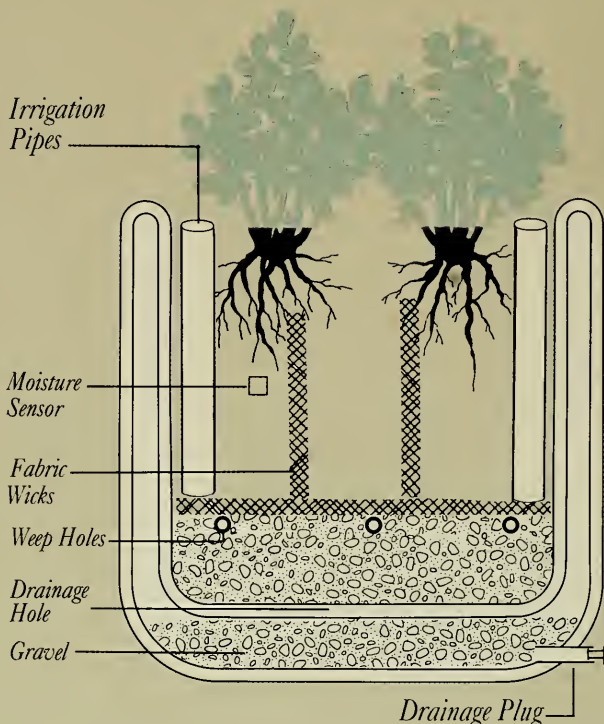
Trees, shrubs, annuals, and herbaceous perennials have shallow root systems. Nonetheless, prepare the soil to a minimum depth of at least 2½ feet to ensure good drainage and a continually viable growing environment. Depending on the type and size of plant material selected, part of the prepared soil will become the firmed subgrade on which the plants rest. The soil throughout the growing environment must be uniform in texture.

Differences in soil texture create an interface which inhibits the continued movement of water through the rooting environment. The waterlogging and poor drainage which result deprive plant roots of oxygen which they must have and inevitably lead to the decline and death of new plantings.

With highway and median strip plantings, soil replacement may be economically impractical. In this case, increase porosity of the existing soil to meet as closely as possible the textural characteristics of a sandy loam. A soil analysis by a county extension service or soil testing service will indicate the type and amount of amendment needed. Remember, plantings meant to provide color and eye-catching visual interest are conspicuous plantings and merit the best soil environment that can be provided.

It is especially important when planting shrubs and ornamental understory trees to amend the entire new planting areas, not just the planting holes. Amending single planting holes creates a multitude of "teacups" or "bathtubs" in which plant roots often rot in the excessive moisture that accumulates.

## Drainage/Irrigation Equipped Container



At least one company has developed a container that includes a drainage/irrigation system such as shown in the diagram above. Using capillary action, the geo-textile fabric wicks water from the reservoir to the soil surface so that plants have a readily available supply of moisture. The geo-textile fabric maintains a separation between the soil and the pea-gravel reservoir. Moisture monitoring sensors can help determine irrigation frequency, which in turn becomes an easier maintenance practice by using the irrigation/aeration pipes. This irrigation method avoids the surface compaction which can occur through repeated above-ground irrigation.

Related to the overriding needs of drainage, aeration, and moisture retention, soil porosity becomes a key consideration. A sandy loam allows easier infiltration and movement of oxygen and moisture throughout the rooting environment.

# Maintenance

**T**he key to maintenance is good site preparation at the beginning. Nothing is as important, and the extra initial efforts are the best maintenance investment possible. In addition, there are several ways to keep maintenance requirements down and still have beautiful, healthy plantings.

## *Irrigation*

Irrigation is most effective if the soil is moisture-retentive yet well drained, encouraging plants to explore additional sources of moisture and oxygen. If the surface is mulched, even temperature is maintained and surface evaporation is minimized.

## *Mulching*

A porous soil surface allowing continual infiltration of oxygen and moisture must be maintained. Surface "crusting" or compaction, which restricts oxygen intake and increases run-off, can be prevented by a 2"-3" layer of mulch. As plants grow and expand, they will begin to shade and protect the soil surface. Until they cover their allotted space, the mulch will conserve moisture, help maintain an even soil temperature, and hinder weed growth.

## *Pest Control*

The most effective form of pest management is to focus through site preparation on providing the plants with what they need and to buffer them from the most harmful impacts of the surrounding environment. Vigorously growing plant material rarely attracts pest problems severe enough to cause intolerable aesthetic damage. In public plantings, individual plants are usually not scrutinized to the extent they are in home landscapes or public gardens.

## *Fertilization*

At the time of planting, a balanced fertilizer providing appropriate amounts of nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium can be incorporated into the top 4"-6". Whatever the fertilizer used, at least 50% of the nitrogen contained should be in slow release form.

Keep in mind these special considerations in the preparations and treatment of specific planting sites.

### *Naturalistic landscapes*

These are areas such as Roadsides and Larger Parks.

- Avoid depressed areas where water collects or very steep slopes which encourage rapid run off.
- Site new planting as far as design considerations allow from the root systems and/or canopies of existing trees, shrubs, or hedges.
- Aerate the surrounding ground at time of planting and as often as feasible following plant installation. This practice increases infiltration of oxygen and moisture into the surrounding soil providing an expanded source of moisture and oxygen for the new planting.

### *Restricted rooting spaces*

These areas include Median Strips, Rotaries, Traffic circles, Squares, Gateways, and all Containerized plantings.

- Roots are confined to the planting space, becoming totally dependent on the resources in that environment. The soil medium *must* be uniformly porous, encouraging root proliferation and exploitation of *all* available resources.
- In confined and restricted rooting spaces, poor drainage occurs when the movement of water through the soil profile is interrupted. Waterlogging and root kill are the result. The soil must promote good drainage by its porous texture. The site preparation must not cause compacted areas in the sub-surface environment. Accordingly, be careful about the use of heavy equipment, and never handle the soil when it's wet or frozen.
- Thermal radiation arising as asphalt and concrete trap and then release the heat they have absorbed must be taken into account. Re-radiated heat causes rapid dessication in confined rooting spaces. Closer spacing of plant material more quickly shades the soil surface, reducing moisture demand while creating a microclimate of increased humidity.
- The length and width of the planting area have an ecological as well as aesthetic impact. The smaller the planting space, the more susceptible it becomes to rapid dessication and damage. As the planting space increases, so does the microclimate of humidity produced. A degree of internal protection is created as plants

buffer each other from heat and wind.

### *Floral failures*

Not every planting is equally effective. Too often, they fail to capture the interest and visual involvement of those walking, running or riding by. Usually the reasons are easy to detect:

- The planting design is unrelated to the scale and context of the surrounding environment, with the result that a discordant note is struck and a muddled visual message conveyed.
- The vantage point of the viewer was given insufficient consideration. The eye level and the frequency and speed of the viewer are all key factors in the design.
- Site preparation does not take into account the plants' needs nor the environmental impacts of the surrounding environment, e.g., re-radiated heat, salt run-off, wind tunnelling. This results in poor plant performance and an intensive and unnecessary maintenance burden.
- Planting beds and plant selection do not have minimal maintenance in mind. The focus is not on creating plant combinations that adapt equally quickly to site conditions, grow at a comparable rate, and thus remain aesthetically coherent.

### *Vandalism*

Unfortunately, in the urban environment, vandalism does happen. The single best prevention is that the plantings look cared for and maintained. Litter has to be removed. If the planting and maintenance are done by residents, this can provide a sense of ownership that can be achieved in no other way and minimize vandalism. In most cases, perseverance will work: replant the area if the planting is vandalized and replant again if necessary.

# Plant Selection

Roadsides  
Larger Parks  
Medians  
Rotaries  
Squares  
Gateways  
Containers

## Perennials

<i>Achillea filipendulina</i> 'Coronation Gold'	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Achillea filipendulina</i> 'Gold Plate'	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Achillea millefolium</i> 'Fire King'	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Achillea</i> 'Moonshine'	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Anemone japonica</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Anthemis tinctoria</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Aruncus dioicus</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Astilbe x arendsii</i> 'Deutschland'	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Astilbe japonica</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Baptisia australis</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Brunnera macrophylla</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Centranthus ruber</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Cerastium tomentosum</i>	○	○	●	●	○	○	●	○	○
<i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Coreopsis verticillata</i> 'Golden Shower'	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Coreopsis verticillata</i> 'Moonbeam'	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Dicentra spectabilis</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Epidmedium pinnatum</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Erigeron speciosus</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Eupatorium ageratoides</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Eupatorium coelestinum</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Filipendula hexapetala</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
<i>Heliopsis scabra</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
<i>Hemerocallis</i> sp.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Hosta fortunei</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Hosta fortunei aureomarginata</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Hosta sieboldiana</i> 'Frances Williams'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Iris siberica</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
<i>Liriope muscari</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
<i>Lobelia silphilitica</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Lysimachia punctata</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i> 'Mordens Pink'	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Macleaya cordata</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
<i>Monarda didyma</i> 'Croftway Pink'	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Oenothera fruticosa</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Peltiphyllum peltatum</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Roadsides	Larger Parks	Medians	Rotaries	Squares	Gateways	Containers
<i>Perovskia atriplicifolia</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Phlox divaricata</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Polygonatum biflorum</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	●
<i>Rodgersia podophylla</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Rudbeckia</i> 'Goldsturm'	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Salvia</i> 'Ostfriesland'	○	○	●	●	●	○	○
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> 'Autumn Joy'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Thalictrum aquilegifolium</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Veronica spicata</i> 'Blue Peter'	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Yucca filamentosa</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●

## Bulbs

<i>Allium caeruleum</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Crocus</i> sp.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Galanthus</i> sp.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Muscari armeniacum</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Narcissus</i> sp.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Scilla</i> sp.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

## Annuals

<i>Amaranthus tricolor</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Antirrhinum majus</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Aster x frikartii</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Browallia speciosa</i> 'Blue Bells'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Calendula officinalis</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Catharanthus roseus</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Celosia argentea plumosa</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Celosia cristata</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Cleome hasslerana</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Coreopsis tinctoria</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Cosmos bipinnatus</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Dahlia</i> sp.	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Helichrysum bracteatum</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Impatiens</i> hybrids	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Lantana camara</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Pelargonium</i> hybrids	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Salvia farinacea</i> and <i>S. splendens</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Tagetes erecta</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●

# Plant Selection

*continued*

Roadsides  
Larger Parks  
Medians  
Rotaries  
Squares  
Gateways  
Containers

## Annuals – Foliage

<i>Alternanthera versicolor</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Brassica oleracea capitata</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Brassica oleracea</i> 'Dynasty Pink'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Ocimum basilicum</i> 'Dark Opal'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Senecio cineraria</i> 'Silver Dust'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●

## Ornamental Grasses

<i>Arundina variegata</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
Bamboo	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Briza maxima</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Calamagrostis acutiflora</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Eragrostis trichodes</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Festuca ovina</i> var. <i>glauca</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Hakonechloa macra</i> 'Aureola'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Helictotrichon sempervirens</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Imperata cylindrica rubra</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Miscanthus floridulus</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Miscanthus sacchariflorus</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Gracillimus'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Silver Feather'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Variegatus'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Zebrinus'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Molina altissima</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Pennisetum alopecuroides</i> ( <i>Pennisetum japonicum</i> )	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Pennisetum setaceum</i> 'Cupreus'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Phalaris arundinacea picta</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Sasa palmata</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Sinarundina nitida</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Spartina pectinata</i> 'aureo-marginata'	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Spodiopogon sibiricus</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Uiola latifolia</i>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●

## Shrubs

<i>Aesculus parviflora</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Buddleia davidii</i> hybrids	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Chaenomeles speciosa</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Cotinus atropurpureus</i>	○	●	●	●	●	●	●

	Roadsides	Large Parks	Medians	Rotaries	Squares	Gateways	Containers
<i>Cotoneaster apiculatus</i>	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Cotoneaster franchetii</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Deutzia gracilis</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Enkianthus campanulatus</i> cultivars	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Hamamelis x intermedia</i> 'Arnold Promise'	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Hamamelis mollis</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Hydrangea quercifolia</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Ilex glabra</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Ilex verticillata</i> cultivars	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Lonicera maackii</i> 'Rem Red'	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Lonicera tatarica</i> cultivars	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Myrica pennsylvanicum</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Rhododendron</i> species and varieties	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Rhus aromatica</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Rosa</i> 'Betty Prior'	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Rosa</i> 'Bonica'	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Rosa</i> 'Carefree Beauty'	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Rosa</i> 'Iceicle'	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Rosa rugosa</i> hybrids	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Rosa</i> 'Seafoam'	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Salix purpurea</i> 'Nana'	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Viburnum sieboldii</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Viburnum tomentosum</i> 'Mariesii'	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
<i>Viburnum tomentosum</i> 'Shasta'	●	●	●	●	●	●	○

## Small Trees

<i>Amelanchier laevis</i>	●	●	○	○	●	●	○
<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	●	●	○	○	●	●	○
<i>Chionanthus virginicus</i>	●	●	○	○	●	●	○
<i>Cornus kousa</i>	●	●	○	○	●	●	○
<i>Cornus mas</i>	●	●	○	○	●	●	○
<i>Halesia carolina</i>	●	●	○	○	●	●	○
<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	●	●	○	○	●	●	○
<i>Malus</i> - disease resistant varieties and cultivars	●	●	○	○	●	●	○
<i>Oxydendrum arboreum</i>	●	●	○	○	●	●	○
<i>Styrax japonica</i>	●	●	○	○	●	●	○
<i>Syringa reticulata</i>	●	●	○	○	●	●	○

This list provides a reliable, though not comprehensive, guide to plants which are suitable for the suggested conditions.

## *Photo Credits*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Richard Chase:</b><br><i>for the Boston Parks Department</i>         | Title page photo, <i>Page IV</i>   |
| <b>Richard Colbert:</b><br><i>Newark, Delaware, Department of Parks</i> | Roadside plantings, <i>Page 7</i><br>Median plantings, <i>Pages 10 and 11</i>          |
| <b>Richard H. Daley:</b><br><i>Massachusetts Horticultural Society</i>  | Containers plantings, <i>Pages 14 and 15</i><br>Small street container, <i>Page 14</i> |
| <b>James A. van Sweden:</b><br><i>Oehme, van Sweden and Associates</i>  | Roadsides and parks, <i>Pages 4 and 5</i><br>Squares, <i>Pages 8 and 9</i>             |

*Cover illustration by Robin Jareaux*



# Floral Plantings

## *in Urban Landscapes*

*Effective plantings can change a whole landscape or streetscape almost overnight. Annuals, perennials, ornamental grasses and flowering shrubs alone or in combination convey a powerful image of vibrant color and seasonal awareness amid the brown and grey forms of city. Well-designed plantings highlighting color capture the attention and visual involvement of all who see them. They reflect the creativity and dynamism of the urban surroundings while effecting aesthetic and ecological improvement. Sited along roadsides, in medians, rotaries, parks and plazas and at entrances and gateways, well-designed floral displays become an essential feature of the urban environment.*

— Geraldine Weinstein